Board of Governors

Meeting held Wednesday 26th March 2025 at 6pm

Loreto College

MINUTES

Attendance and Apologies		**30/10/24**	**11/12/24**	**25/3/25**
Governor	**Role/Governor Type**			
Ann Wilkinson (AW) Chair	Foundation Governor	✓	✓	✓
Michael Jaffrain (MJ)	Principal	✓	✓	✓
Emma Cullen (EC)	Co-ted Governors	✓	A	A
Victoria Dolan (VD)	Foundation Governor	✓	A	✓
Stephen Gabriel (SG)	Foundation Governor	A	R	A
Sean Gaughan (SFG)	Foundation Governor	✓	✓	✓
Sr Patricia Goodstadt (PMG)	Foundation Governor	✓	A	✓
Mary Heaney (MH)	Foundation Governor	✓	✓	A
John McNerney (JM)	Foundation Governor	✓	✓	✓
Avril Messenger (AM)	Parent Governor	✓	✓	✓
Janet Nevin (JN)	Foundation Governor	✓	✓	R
Stuart Robertson (SR)	Staff Governor	✓	✓	A
Julian Skyrme (JS)	Co-opted Governor	✓	✓	✓
Sarah Taylor (ST)	Co-opted Governor	✓	✓	✓
Niall Wright (NW)	Foundation Governor	A	✓	A
Hannah Yue (HY)	U6 Student Governor	✓	A	✓
Darryl Mbongue (DM)	L6 Student Governor			✓
In Attendance				
Alison Gould (AG)	Clerk	✓	A	✓
Tracey Livesey (TL)	VP: Planning and Resources	✓	✓	✓
Andrea Pritchard (AP)	Deputy Principal	✓	A	✓
Cate Carr (CC)	VP: Curriculum and Standards	✓	✓	✓
Karen Musgrove (KM)	RSM		R	
Noreen Poole (NP)	Clerk		✓	

Opening Prayer

1. PRELIMINARIES

1.1 Apologies and Quorum

Apologies were received from N Wright, S Robertson, M Heaney and S Gabriel. The Chair noted that J Nevin was attending remotely. The Chair welcomed D Mbongue to his first meeting as L6 Student Governor.

1.2 Declarations of Interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

1.3 Items of a confidential nature

The Chair agreed that the Estates report should be minuted confidentially.

2. GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS, RESIGNATIONS AND NOMINATIONS

(This agenda item was discussed at end of meeting at the request of the Chair).
The Chair confirmed that there were no appointments, nominations or re-nominations to consider. The Chair acknowledged John McNerney's resignation from the Board effective from 26/3/2025 and thanked him on behalf of the Board for his exemplary service as Governor, Vice Chair and Committee Member.

3. LAST MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

3.1 Minutes of the meeting of 11/12/2024

The report was noted. Governors reviewed the minutes and agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting.

RESOLUTION R1 **The minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held on 11/12/2024 were approved.**

3.2 Matters arising

The following matters arising were discussed:
A1 Re-tendering for auditors for 2025/26. TL confirmed that the process is about to start and will be monitored through the Audit Committee and the outcome would be reported to the Board. Governors noted that other Colleges had experienced difficulties in getting firms to tender for external audit work.

A2 Catering. AW confirmed that a report on Catering is now submitted to each Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting. MJ gave a verbal report, highlighting:

- a slight improvement on service but that service levels still gave concern.
- student voice feedback has indicated that services are mediocre.
- MJ was visiting Cardinal Newman to review catering provision.

DM reported that an Aramark Manager had attended a Student Council meeting, where matters such as price and charging for sauces were discussed. DM and HY confirmed that:

- the reputation of the catering services is poor, so students do not use the services.
- students were concerned that the student bursary only covers the cost of a main meal and no longer covers the cost of a drink.
- pricing was not clear to students.

A3 Careers Governor. AW reported that there had been no volunteers to take on this statutory role. VD volunteered to take on the role.

ACTION A1 **Clerk/AP to contact VD regarding the role of Careers Governor and agree the scope of activity required in line with the role description.**

4. COMMITTEE MATTERS

4.1 Minutes of committees and matters arising

(i) F&GP Committee 27/1/2025

The report was noted. Governors noted that this meeting had been discussed at the last Board meeting and minutes had been approved by the Finance and General Purposes committee.

RESOLUTION R2 **The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee (27/1/25) were adopted.**

(ii) Standards 4/12/2024

The report was noted. Governors noted that this meeting had been discussed at the last Board meeting and minutes had been approved by the Standards committee.

RESOLUTION R3 **The minutes of the Standards Committee (27/1/25) were adopted.**

(iii) Audit Committee 10/12/2024

The report was noted. Governors noted that this meeting had been discussed at the last Board meeting and minutes had been approved by the Audit committee.

RESOLUTION R4 **The minutes of the Audit Committee (10/12/2024) were adopted.**

4.2 Reports from Committee Chairs

(i) Finance and General Purposes Committee (17/3/2025)

The Committee Chair (SFG) reported that the key matters discussed in this meeting were on the agenda for discussion by the Board and confirmed that in addition the following matters had been discussed: extension of College insurance policy, implementation of national pay awards for both teaching and support staff, catering service, plans to remove portable classrooms, actions to address the cyber security internal audit report, health and safety incidents, site security, HR report, sustainability strategy and environmental report.

JMN left the meeting.

(ii) Standards Committee held 12/2/2025

The Committee Chair was unable to make a report due to technical difficulties with remote access.

(iii) Audit Committee held 5/3/2025

JS reported to the Board on behalf of the Audit Committee. JS reported that:

- three internal audit reports had been completed (cyber security, governance and Follow Up on Previous Reports)
- it was pleasing that actions were already underway to address recommendations.
- Governors discussed the risk register in detail.

ACTION A2 **Audit Committee to review the circulation of internal audit reports, with particular reference to circulating relevant reports to committees.**

ACTION A3 **Internal Audit report on Cyber Security to be circulated to Finance and General Purposes Committee.**

(iv) Search and Governance Committee held 21/3/2025

The Committee Chair(PMG) reported that the Committee discussed an approach to recruit more governors, particularly Foundation Governors, drawing from alumni and past employees, the use of a Governors Portal, the adoption of a Code of Governance and a report from the U6 Student Governor on the role of the Student Governor and recommendations for action.

5. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

5.1 Executive Summary

The report was noted. MJ highlighted:

- Vibrant Politics Society
- Highest number of Oxbridge offers
- Gold Carnegie FE Mental Health Award

5.2 Recruitment and Retention of Staff

MJ made a verbal report highlighting:

- the nationally high turnover in education roles mirrors the high turnover (34%) in the UK as a whole.
- based on a total headcount of 344, turnover at Loreto (17.7%) is below the average UK education turnover (33.7%)
- turnover at Loreto significantly higher for enabling staff (27.6%), in particular ESAs, than teaching staff, (11.4%)

MJ reported that exit interviews were generally positive about Loreto as an employer and that many people applying for enabling roles expect the option to work from home, noting the homeworking policy that allows enabling staff to apply to work from home 1 day per week.

CC confirmed the core teaching hours, expected teaching load and marking load and that staff with non-teaching periods are expected to work on site. CC reported that the applicant booklet has been updated significantly to demonstrate Loreto values as an employer and that the college has advertised vacancies early, resulting in a large number of high-quality applications and numerous appointments.

AP joined the meeting.

6. FINANCE AND AUDIT MATTERS

6.1 Management Accounts (January 2025)

The report was noted. TL outlined the key metrics. Governors noted the positive cash balance, income which was slightly below budget and the net underspend.

6.2 Funding Allocation 2025/26

The report was noted. TL reported that:

- the funding rate has increased for 2025/26 by 3.8%.
- TPS contribution and Student Support allocations have not been fully confirmed.
- further news on funding allocations is due in May 2025.
- the criteria for distributing the 16-19 bursary for have changed. The sector has given feedback to DfE on the difficulty of allocating funding particularly for trips/visits/excursions.

Governors agreed that the changes to the allocation criteria for 16-19 bursary funding was frustrating and it was important to continue lobbying for changes to the allocation criteria.

6.3 Mid- Year Report on Financial Objectives

The report was noted. Governors had no further substantive comments.

6.4 General Funding Matters

The report was noted. Governors noted that the in-year growth funding allocation criteria has changed since the start of the year, reducing the amount the College will receive (around £30k less than in the budget).

6.5 Risk Register

The report was noted. Governors noted that the risk register had been reviewed by the Finance and General Purposes Committee and approved by the Audit Committee. TL reported that R5.01 needs to be updated as the support staff pay award has been agreed and implemented.

RESOLUTION R5 **The Risk Register was approved.**

7. ESTATES - CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

[redacted]

[redacted]

8. CURRICULUM AND STANDARDS MATTERS

The Curriculum Report was noted. CC highlighted that:

- the data in this report related to 6 January 2025 but another monitoring report has since taken place,
- work going ahead to make WTG's more consistent between subjects.
- excellent GCSE results
- 13 subjects are being offered this year as Subjects in a Year, with 11 subjects to be offered next year.
- Cross College Quality Improvement Plan showed that attendance had increased by 1% on last year to 95.4%, which had been partly facilitated by the development of an attendance portal, which has made it easier to monitor attendance.

TL reported that the timetable model has been adjusted for 2025/26 to accommodate guided learning hours requirements, with the pastoral timetable being changed (reduction from 2 tutorials per week to 1 long tutorial a week). Governors discussed how this reduction would affect safeguarding support and were assured that the impact of this reduction is being offset by a new role focussed on pastoral support and intervention, which would be monitored closely during the coming year.

9. STUDENT MATTERS

9.1 Deputy Principal's Report: Safeguarding

The report was noted. AP reported that:

- CAMHS are now closed to new referrals and that there is a 2-year waiting list.
- 518 students have a safeguarding need of 2 or more (an increase of 40 since last report), with the primary safeguarding need being mental health).
- online filtering and monitoring processes are successful in identifying issues, with individual follow up.
- AI image generation may be increasingly challenging for safeguarding in the future.

JS proposed a deep dive into how the challenges faced by neurodiverse students are addressed by the College.

ACTION A4	**SLT to make recommendations on the scope and focus of deep dives for 2025/26.**

9.2 Student Governors' Report

The report circulated at the meeting was noted. DM and HY highlighted:

- improved public transport which has helped with attendance.
- support for students doing mocks, with resources available on share point.
- late library opening

- inclusiveness
- provision of easter revision, which is in high demand, with resources available on share point.
- nuisance caused by students vaping outside the College.
- congestion on the campus

Governors discussed the matters raised and were assured that the College has a robust process for identifying and addressing matters raised through the Student Council.

DM and HY left the meeting.

10. GOVERNANCE MATTERS

10. 1 Verbal Report from the Chair

AW reported that a Board Papers Working Group has been formed to address recommendations raised by the External Review of Governance, in particular re-focusing and streamlining papers for Board and Committee meetings. Governors noted that the Working Group would report to the Board in July 2025.

10.2 Loreto Education Trust Report

PMG reported that:

- LET Board discussed the union of the IBMV and CJs, with both organisations visiting the UK in May 2025.
- CES are meeting to discuss future of Catholic colleges.
- A Pritchard has joined the LET Board as a Trustee and Sr Magdelene has resigned.
- feedback is requested from all Governors on the LET Governors meeting held on 19/3/2025.
- support is ongoing for Chorlton High School on addressing the OFSTED report.

11. POLICIES FOR REVIEW

11.1 Referred from Standards Committee

(i) Behaviour Policy

The report was noted. Governors noted that this policy had been reviewed by the Standards Committee and discussed the recommended updates.

RESOLUTION R6 **The Behaviour Policy was approved.**

Governors discussed how the use of AI was reflected in College policies and were assured that whilst the College does not have a stand-alone AI policy, the matter is addressed in relevant policies (e.g. Examinations Policy, Behaviour Policy), internal procedures, and that through tutorial students are advised on how to use AI positively. Governors were also assured that staff are trained to both use AI and to work within JCQ guidelines.

11.2 Referred from Audit Committee

(i) Whistleblowing Policy

The report was noted. Governors reviewed the recommended updates.

RESOLUTION R7 **The Whistleblowing Policy was approved.**

11.3 Approved by Delegated Authority

Governors noted that the Risk Management Policy had been approved by the Audit Committee.

12. AOB

There were no matters raised for discussion.

The date of the next meeting was confirmed (Wednesday 2nd July 2025).

Closing prayer.

The meeting closed at 20.10.